PAGE 01 BONN 17236 110446Z
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FM AMEMBASSY BONN
TO AMEMBASSY REYKJAVIK IMMEDIATE
INFO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6162

S E C R E T BONN 17236

EXDIS DECAPTIONED

C O R R E C T E D C O P Y (PASSING INSTRUCTIONS)

REYKJAVIK PLEASE PASS TO SECRETARY SHULTZ, SECSTATE TO AMBASSADOR CARLUCCI FROM AMBASSADOR BURT

E.O. 12356: DECL: OADR
TAGS: PREL, PGOV, GE
SUBJECT: THE EAST BERLIN DISTURBANCES AND THE PRESIDENT'S
. BRANDENBURG GATE SPEECH

1. S - ENTIRE TEXT.

2. YOU WILL HAVE READ PRESS AND EMBASSY REPORTING FROM BERLIN ON THE DISTURBANCES THAT OCCURRED IN EAST BERLIN IN THE EVENINGS OF JUNE 6-8 IN THE VICINITY OF THE WALL AND THE BRANDENBURG GATE. NOT SURPRISINGLY, THESE EVENTS HAVE BEEN THE SUBJECT OF A GREAT DEAL OF ATTENTION IN THE WEST GERMAN PRESS, AND ARE GENERALLY VIEWED AS THE MOST SERIOUS OUTBREAK OF DISSATISFACTION IN THE GDR SINCE 1953. EMBASSY BERLIN'S REPORTING HAS PLACED THESE DISTURBANCES IN PERSPECTIVE AND HAS MADE CLEAR THAT THERE IS NO SERIOUS THREAT TO THE EAST GERMAN REGIME. NEVERTHELESS, THESE EVENTS WILL FORM THE BACKGROUND AGAINST WHICH THE

PAGE 02 BONN 17236 110446Z

PRESIDENT'S SPEECH AT THE BRANDENBURG GATE ON THE 12TH WILL BE SEEN AND INTERPRETED. THIS MEANS, ON THE ONE HAND, THAT THE SPEECH WILL HAVE EVEN GREATER RESONANCE THAN IT MIGHT OTHERWISE HAVE HAD. ON THE OTHER HAND, IT

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF STATE
REVIEW AUTHORITY: WILLIAM J GEHRON
DATE/CASE ID: 22 DEC 2004 200403871

WILL BE ESPECIALLY IMPORTANT TO STRIKE THE RIGHT BALANCE BETWEEN INSPIRING HOPE AND OPPOSING TOTALITARIANISM, WHILE MAKING CLEAR THAT ONE'S IS A VISION OF CHANGE THROUGH PEACEFUL MEANS.

3. THE JUNE 6-8 DISTURBANCES BEGAN WHEN A CROWD OF SOME 1,000 GATHERED AS CLOSE TO THE WALL AS POSSIBLE TO LISTEN TO AN OUTDOOR ROCK CONCERT ADJACENT TO THE REICHSTAG IN WEST BERLIN. THE CROWD CLASHED WITH POLICE SENT IN TO CONTROL THEM AND MOVE THEM AWAY FROM THE WALL. ROCKS AND BOTTLES WERE THROWN, SLOGANS WERE CHANTED, THERE WERE SCUFFLES BETWEEN POLICE AND ROCK FANS, AND A NUMBER OF ARRESTS WAS MADE. THERE WERE REPEAT PERFORMANCES ON THE FOLLOWING TWO EVENINGS (AS THE ROCK CONCERT CONTINUED), WITH INCREASINGLY LARGE CROWDS AND BETTER PREPARED POLICE FORCES. THE SECOND TWO EVENINGS SEEM TO HAVE ATTRACTED A SOMEWHAT BROADER CROSS-SECTION--NOT SIMPLY ROCK FANS.

4. THE SLOGANS CHANTED ON ALL THREE EVENINGS WERE OPENLY POLITICAL: "WE WANT FREEDOM|" "THE WALL MUST GO|" AND, INTERESTINGLY, "GORBACHEV, GORBACHEV|" A SOVIET MFA SPOKESMAN HAS PUBLICLY EXPRESSED SATISFACTION WITH THE LATTER. THE GDR, ON THE OTHER HAND, HAS ISSUED A VERY DEFENSIVE STATEMENT THAT BESPEAKS NOT SO MUCH THE SERIOUSNESS OF THE DISTURBANCES AS THE HYPERSENSITIVITY OF THE EAST GERMAN REGIME, WHICH HAS INVESTED SO MUCH TO EMPHASIZE THE NORMALITY OF THE SITUATION IN THE GDR. THIS

STATEMENT TERMS THE ROCK CONCERT A DELIBERATELY PROVOCATIVE ACT, AND TIES IT IN WITH THE RE-OPENING OF THE SEVERAL HUNDRED METERS OF STREET DIRECTLY TO THE WEST OF THE BRANDENBURG GATE (CLOSED A NUMBER OF YEARS AGO BECAUSE OF AN ATTACK ON GUARDS AT THE SOVIET WAR MEMORIAL THERE). THIS REOPENED STREET WILL BE THE AREA IN WHICH THE PRESIDENT WILL BE SPEAKING.

5. ON BALANCE THE EAST BERLIN DISTURBANCES WILL BE HELPFUL IN ENSURING WIDER COVERAGE OF THE PRESIDENT'S VISIT AND SPEECH. THEY HIGHLIGHT THE CONTINUED UNACCEPTABILITY OF THE WALL FOR THE EAST GERMAN POPULATION AND OF THE GDR REGIME WHICH NEEDS TO HIDE BEHIND IT. ON THE OTHER HAND, THE DISTURBANCES HAVE HEIGHTENED SENSITIVITIES AMONG GERMANS ON BOTH SIDES OF THE DIVIDE

AND WILL MEAN THAT THE PRESIDENT'S REMARKS, ESPECIALLY ON THE SUBJECT OF THE WALL, WILL BE SUBJECTED TO ESPECIALLY CLOSE SCRUTINY. I BELIEVE THAT IT WOULD BE USEFUL TO REVIEW THE SPEECH IN THIS LIGHT TO ENSURE THAT IT STRIKES THE RIGHT BALANCE.

BURT

SECRET

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